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RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0411
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0410
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 0400
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LAGOS 000459

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/OSAC
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON
OSLO FOR HELENA SCHRADER
DOE FOR GPERSON, CAROLYN GAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELD
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/20/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: ASARI'S RELEASE IS NOT A PANACEA FOR THE NIGER
DELTA

REF: A. ABUJA 1276

[1](#)B. LAGOS 419

[1](#)C. 06 LAGOS 1268

[1](#)D. LAGOS 412

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Classified By: Consul Alan B. C. Latimer for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) leader, Dokubo Asari, was released on bail by the Abuja High Court on June 14. Despite the release of 10 Indian national hostages on June 15, militants have warned the federal government and multinational companies that Asari's release is not a panacea for the Niger Delta's problems. On June 16, a former Agip security contractor led armed individuals, "not militants," in overtaking Agip's Ogboinbiri flow station in Bayelsa State, effectively shutting down the flow of 12,000 barrels of oil each day, according to a company source. Chevron's Abiteye flow station in Delta State was invaded by youths on June 17 and abandoned by them the following day; Chevron is currently producing 42,000 bpd at this flow station. End Summary.

Asari Released June 14, MONDP Warns
Asari's Release is Not an End-All

12. (C) Upon his release by a Federal High Court, Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF) leader Dokubo Asari returned to Port Harcourt, Rivers State on June 16 (Ref A). (Comment: The governors of Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta states met with Federal Government representatives on numerous occasions to request Asari's release. End Comment.) According to press reports, Asari recently said that foreign oil workers put themselves at risk of being kidnapped because they refuse to depart the Niger Delta despite militant warnings. Asari called former President Obasanjo's Administration the "most corrupt" in Nigeria because it made more money than any other administration and gave nothing back to the country.

13. (U) The purported spokesman for the Movement of the Niger Delta People (MONDP), Preye Amazo, said Asari's release would not end conflict in the region. He called on multinationals to "review their operational policies in the area towards host communities." Amazo said MONDP was arranging the release of four expatriates in their custody (Dutch, British, French and Pakistani nationals) (Ref B), which media reports credit to the release of Dokubo Asari on bail.

14. (SBU) The Joint Revolutionary Council (Ref C), composed of the Niger Delta Emancipation Front (NDPEF), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and the Martyrs Brigade (TMB), issued a statement the day after Asari's release signed by "Cynthia Whyte," announcing the "complete cessation of hostilities against the Nigerian state and her perceived collaborators." The statement commended Governor Timipre Sylva of Bayelsa State for his "exceptional courage and leadership" and recommended he "stay his course" and remain committed to improving the lives of people in the Niger Delta.

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15. (U) The Ijaw National Congress (INC) and Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) both hailed President Yar'adua on the release of Asari, which the INC called "a welcome development" that has opened a window for serious dialogue on the Niger Delta. However, IYC President Felix Tuodolor warned that Asari's release should not be mistaken for a solution to crisis in the region, although it would help expose those involved in "commercial and criminal hostage taking."

10 Indian Hostages Released; 1 Polish National Kidnapped

16. (U) On June 15, militants released 10 Indian nationals, including two women and two children, abducted two weeks earlier from their residence in Port Harcourt (Ref D).

17. (U) A Polish national working for the construction firm Dredging Atlantic was abducted on June 14 in Kolokuma-Opokuma, Bayelsa State. Jomo Gbomo, the purported spokesman for the Movement for Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), said criminal elements, not MEND, were responsible for the kidnapping.

Bayelsa/Agip: Militants Shut-in 12,000 BPD,
27 Nigerians Held Hostage

18. (C) At approximately 5:00 AM on June 17, armed individuals, "not militants," took control of Italian-owned Agip's flow station in Ogboinbiri, in the Southern Ijaw local Government Area (LGA), Bayelsa State, according to an Agip security source. The Agip security source said 41 soldiers "immediately escaped" when the armed men arrived. Eleven soldiers and 16 Nigerian workers are still hostages. Fidelis Anju, the General Manager for Public Affairs of Agip Oil Company, told Poloff on June 19 that production at the time

of the shut down at the flow station was 12,000 bpd.

¶9. (C) According to an Agip security source, the attack was led by Isaac, a former security contractor for Agip. (Note: The Agip security source did not think this was a reprisal attack for the June 13 killing of eight militants by the Joint Task Force (JTF) near Ogboinbiri, Bayelsa State. End Note.) Isaac is believed to have choreographed the attack to demand pecuniary ransom and to gain a contract for the protection of the company's pipelines. There was reportedly no damage to the flow station's infrastructure and the attackers have allowed electricity to reach the facility.

Delta/Chevron: Internal Community Dispute

¶10. (C) Chevron's 42,000 bpd Abiteye flow station in neighboring Delta State was invaded by youths on June 17 and abandoned by them the following day, according to Femi Odumabo, Press Relations officer for Chevron. Odumabo told Poloff on June 20 that production returned to 42,000 bpd on June 18. The youths overtook the platform because they were

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upset the "community was not sharing" the naira 150 million (approximately USD 1.17 million) compensation Chevron paid to the community two weeks earlier. (Note: This community compensation is part of Chevron's memorandum of understanding (MOU) with this community. End Note.) Therefore Odumabo described this incident as an internal community dispute.

Comment

¶11. (C) Recent kidnappings and attacks on oil facilities suggest Asari's release has had little immediate effect on improving security in the Niger Delta. While Ijaw and militant groups have lauded Asari's release, they have also stated this will not solve the Niger Delta crisis. It is now up to state and federal governments to address Niger Delta indigenes' long-standing grievances. End Comment.
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